

Guidance Documents

Resource Management System Guide Sheet

For: **RANGELAND**

STATE: Montana
F.O.: Harlowton
Date: August 2001

RESOURCE SETTING: The resource area is in mountain foothills on the south slope of the Snowy Mountains north of Ryegate, Montana. Soils are typically gravelly highly calcareous alluvium of the Judith and Crago series. Slopes typically range from 5 to 15 percent. Average annual precipitation ranges from 12 to 14 inches. Livestock operations in the area are typically cow-calf operations with the rangeland being used for spring and summer forage. Wildlife species include pronghorn antelope, mule deer, sharptailed grouse, sage grouse, and whitetailed deer. Some water development and fencing have been completed on ranches in the area. Similarity Index to potential is generally below 35 percent with the plant community dominated by blue grama and prairie junegrass. Rangeland trend is stable to downward with the invasion of noxious weeds in some areas. Average range management unit or pasture size is about 1,280 acres.

IDENTIFIED PROBLEMS: Livestock and wildlife forage and cover suffers in quality from years of over use. In some years a concentration of livestock along riparian corridors degrades riparian habitat. Pests including noxious weeds are invading grazing areas. Growing season rest is needed to improve suitable plants and plant condition.

ESSENTIAL PRACTICES: The practice standard considered essential to meet a RMS is 528—Prescribed Grazing.

RMS OPTIONS:

RMS #1 Practices (Spring Development)

382	Fence	Creates more grazing units for enhanced livestock distribution and protects riparian habitat.
528	Prescribed Grazing	Manage utilization, season of use, and frequency of grazing to enhance the desired plant community.
574	Spring Development	Provide water for more uniform grazing.
580	Streambank and Shoreline Protection	Limit livestock watering access to a more stabilized area.
645	Upland Wildlife Habitat Management	Manage to increase overall upland wildlife habitat.
595	Pest Management (Chemical)	Control pests including spotted knapweed and leafy spurge.
614	Watering Facility	To provide adequate water to extend grazing season and improve forage use.

RMS #2 Practices (Water Well)

382	Fence	Creates more grazing units for enhanced livestock distribution and protects riparian habitat.
528	Prescribed Grazing	Manage utilization, season of use, and frequency of grazing to enhance the desired plant community.
580	Streambank and Shoreline Protection	Limit livestock watering access to a more stabilized area.
642	Water Well	Provide water for more uniform grazing.
645	Upland Wildlife Habitat Management	Manage to increase overall upland wildlife habitat.
595	Pest Management (Chemical)	Control pests including spotted knapweed and leafy spurge.
614	Watering Facility	To provide adequate water to extend grazing season and improve forage use.

EXAMPLE RMS GUIDE SHEET—To be discarded after local guide sheet is developed.